

~~SECRET~~

SOVIET VIOLATIONS OF SAFE CONDUCT PLEDGES

21 July 1958

PLANNING NO. _____
DO STAY IN CLASS ☒
☐ DISCONTINUED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C 204
NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____
AUTH: NS 70-2
DATE: 1/13/81 REVIEWED: 00118

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

SOVIET VIOLATIONS OF SAFE CONDUCT PLEDGES

Contents

INTRODUCTION	page 1
1. Garcia	2
2. Valentin Gonsalez	3
3. Friend	5
4. Antonov-Ovseenko	6
5. Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich	7
6. Raoul Wallenberg	9
7. Michael Shipkov	11
8. Bela Kovacs	12
9. Laszlo Rajk	13
10. Vladimir Clementis	16
11. Polish Underground Leaders	21
SOURCES	28

SECRET

SECRET

SOVIET VIOLATIONS OF SAFE CONDUCT PLEDGES

Introduction

The latest example of Soviet duplicity and disregard of solemn commitments is the execution of László Nagy. It reminds one of the long Soviet record of deception, arbitrary brutality, and murder. Mass betrayals indiscriminately of Communists, Communist sympathizers, and non-Communists is a matter of familiar history and public record. Some of the mass betrayals perpetrated by the Soviets are: the massacre of Bolshevik revolutionaries in Kronstadt in 1921, continuing through the Great Purges in Moscow from 1936-38, the holding of Loyalist refugees from the Spanish Civil War, the liquidation of the Polish Communist Party in 1938, the handing over of German Communists to the Nazis as a result of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, the Katyn Forest massacres of 1940, abandonment of the Polish underground to massacre by the Nazis in the Warsaw uprising of 1944, and the imprisonment and execution of countless thousands of Hungarians for participation in the 1956 revolution against a Kádár pledge to the contrary.

Familiar also is the infamous Soviet record of deceit and duplicity in its conquest of Eastern Europe after World War II by which the anti-Stalinist leadership of Eastern Europe was emasculated and neutralized. Equally familiar is the vast literature of escapees from the Soviet Union who had idealistically emigrated to the USSR as the land of ultimate hope for humanity only to be imprisoned, tortured and executed on charges hollow of substance.

Instances of official pledges of safe conduct and good treatment made to individuals and subsequently broken, analogous to the Nagy case, are relatively rare. The Soviets have always preferred (and have been able) to liquidate without making public promises to the contrary, using such pledges only when other means of luring the potential victim failed. Attached are 10 individual cases, and also those of the Polish underground leaders, paralleling the Nagy betrayal.

SECRET

SECRET

1. Garcia

Garcia, Spanish Loyalist secret police chief, was held prisoner in the Soviet Union in return for his services to Stalin in the Spanish Civil War.

Sent to the USSR to attend the May Day celebrations of 1937, Garcia was wined and dined, traveling and vacationing in the Crimea, Caucasus, and Leningrad, under escort of the NKVD. In effect he was a prisoner in the Soviet Union, for he had repeatedly demanded to return to Spain, but was prevented from doing so because his presence there at that time would have created additional obstacles to Stalin's plans for Spain. At the time Stalin was conducting a thorough purge of Spanish Loyalists whose allegiance to the national cause was greater than their loyalty to Stalin. 1/

SECRET

SECRET

2. Valentin Gonzalez ("El Campesino")

Valentin Gonzalez, a Spanish Communist known as "El Campesino," rendered invaluable assistance to the Communist and Soviet cause in the Spanish Civil War, after which he was invited to study in the Soviet Union and ended up in a forced labor camp.

"Valentin Gonzalez was born in 1909, the son of poor peasants of Extremadura. He early joined the revolutionary Anarchists, and at 15 had to take to the mountains after hurling a bomb into a Civil Guard post. He eluded pursuit for several months, but was finally captured and tortured for refusing to reveal his accomplices. Further Anarchist and Trade Union activities led to his spending the greater part of his early manhood in jail. The police derogatorily dubbed him 'El Campesino' (The Peasant)--a nickname which has stuck ever since.

"During one of his prison periods a cell-mate converted him to Soviet Communism and he quickly developed into one of the most fanatical members of the Spanish Communist Party.

"With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936 came his great opportunity. His single-minded devotion, his energy and daring, his lack of inhibitions when waging the class war, marked him out as a natural leader. Round him gathered a band of desperadoes which grew rapidly until organized into a Division of which he was appointed Commander. When the Russians assumed a thinly camouflaged political and military control, his prestige and dynamism made it impossible for them to ignore him. His independent spirit and volcanic temperament, however, qualified him for a roving guerrilla commission rather than for a niche in the regular military hierarchy. So his forces were used as a combination of shock troops and commandos.

"The fame of his exploits spread to (and in) the USSR, and after the Republican collapse he was invited to make his home in the Soviet Union.

"He was admitted as an officer-student, with the rank of General, to the Frunze Military Academy--premier institution of this kind in the Soviet Union. Students there have many privileges ranging from excellent food to the most chic and accomplished prostitutes--although enjoyment of the lavish hospitality provided by the filles de joie was damped by the

SECRET

SECRET

discovery that they were all NKVD spies. When he had protested the ubiquitous espionage and close control over private life, denounced social and economic inequality, objected to being 'instructed' by lecturers with much less than his own experience of actual warfare, and obstinately given unorthodox answers in his oral examination, he was expelled from the Academy, put to forced labour, and then deported to the south. Thence he escaped to Teheran, was recaptured by the NKVD and sent back to the USSR. At that point began his real sufferings. Confinement under inhuman conditions and torture in the notorious Lubyanka prison were followed by the sentence of 13 years' forced labour in Siberia." After two unsuccessful attempts, he finally escaped from the USSR. 2/

SECRET

SECRET

3. Friend

Friend, a young Englishman with Soviet sympathies, gained admission to the Soviet Union, was dispatched to help the Communist cause in the Spanish Civil War, and then was lured back to the Soviet Union to be imprisoned.

"A radio engineer named Friend, had a brother in Leningrad, married to a Russian girl. He was an enthusiastic anti-Fascist, and Soviet Russia was the land of his dreams. He succeeded, after long efforts, in gaining admission to the Soviet Union, and took up his residence there.

"When Soviet intervention began, he was dispatched to Spain as a radio technician. Early in 1937, a report arrived at the Moscow headquarters of the OGPU to the effect that Friend was showing 'Trotskyist sympathies.' I knew the boy, and there is no question in my mind that he was wholeheartedly devoted to the Loyalist cause and to the Soviet Union. True, he had associated with Socialists and other radicals, which was only natural for a young Englishman unaware of the invisible Chinese Wall segregating the Soviet personnel from the Spaniards.

"Later I asked one of the OGPU officials in Moscow about him, and was answered evasively. On further inquiry, I learned that Friend had been brought home as a prisoner to Odessa. I was told of the trick by which he had been taken. The OGPU in Spain had lured him on to a Soviet vessel, pretending that he was needed to repair the ship's radio transmitter. Friend had no suspicion that the OGPU was after him. Once on board, he was seized. On April 12, he was put in the dungeons of the OGPU in Moscow. To this day, his brother in Leningrad and his family in England do not know what happened to him. Nor have I been able to learn whether he was executed as a 'spy' or lives now in a remote concentration camp." 3/

SECRET

4. Antonov-Ovseenko

Antonov-Ovseenko was a Soviet diplomat lured back to the USSR to liquidation under false promise.

"...Antonov-Ovseenko, consul general of the USSR in Barcelona, was promoted to the post of People's Commissar for Justice and told to return to Moscow in order to take up his new functions. He took ship and may have landed in Odessa, but he never arrived at his new post. He was arrested somewhere in the course of the journey, and that was the end of him. The portfolio of justice was merely bait for the trap." 4/

SECRET

SECRET

5. Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich

Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, internationally famous Polish Socialists, were arrested by the Soviets in 1939, amnestied to help the Soviet anti-Nazi cause and again arrested. World protests against their disappearance were received in silence by the Soviet Union. Finally, in February 1943, Molotov admitted that they had been executed.

"Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, internationally known socialist leaders in Poland, were arrested in 1939 by the invading Soviet armies. Polish patriots, democratic spokesmen, distinguished in Jewish circles, fighters against poverty and injustice, they were soon arrested by the Soviet administration and sent to the Butirki Prison in Moscow. The charges against them, made by the highest officials of the Soviet secret police, ran from attempted acts of sabotage to collaboration with fascists; in short, not unfamiliar charges. That these allegations were absurd when leveled against leaders of anti-Nazi opinion in Poland, against two men, furthermore, who as Jews and democrats had opposed Nazism since its inception--these absurdities did not diminish at all the ferocity of the Soviet 'charges.' It is instructive of the caliber of Alter and Erlich to note that neither of them could be compelled to sign a 'confession.' In time both were sentenced to death. But this, horrible as it was, was not to be the end of their story.

"Their sentences were suddenly and strangely reduced to 10 years of forced labor, and after the agreement with Poland, which called for amnesty of Polish prisoners, both were released. The Soviet Union had need of them. Since the major conviction of the two men was the necessity for total war to be waged against Nazi Germany, and since the Nazis had marched against Russia, their aid was enlisted by the Russians in the battle against Nazism. To some, all that seemed to have happened was that the Soviet Union had originally made a mistake in regard to the Polish leaders, a mistake it was now trying to rectify, and understandably there were no recriminations.

"At this high point of good feeling, the Soviet Union acted once more and without warning. Alter and Erlich suddenly disappeared. Inquiries brought only the information that they had been arrested again. Early in 1942 the NKVD ominously

SECRET

SECRET

declared that the two men were Soviet citizens; Polish protests on this point were ignored. The matter was now so clear, and so frightful, that world labor intervened, as did individually many of the most distinguished men of science, art, letters, and politics, persons of the stature of Albert Einstein and Eleanor Roosevelt. The Soviet Union retained its silence in the face of all of these requests and demands that the two men be freed. One telegram finally received a reply in February, 1943. Molotov brazenly ordered Ambassador Litvinov to inform William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, that Alter and Erlich had manifested hostility for the Soviet regime and had made 'appeals to the Soviet troops to stop bloodshed and immediately to conclude peace with Germany.' They had been rearrested and once again sentenced to death. Casually, Molotov concluded: 'This sentence has been carried out in regard to both of them.' Later an even more ghastly detail was learned: the two men had been killed as early as December 1941, soon after their arrest; at the time that the Soviet Union seemed calmly to consider the many appeals for their release, they were already dead!" 5/

SECRET

SECRET

6. Raoul Wallenberg

Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat, worked in Hungary in 1944-1945 to transfer to Sweden Jews threatened with Nazi persecution. When the Soviets invaded Hungary, they picked up Wallenberg, ignoring his diplomatic immunity, and imprisoned him in Lubianka prison where, according to the Soviet note, he died in July 1947.

"... the story of Raoul Wallenberg is not one that can be quickly forgotten. Nor can a polite apology atone for the personal tragedy, or undo the violation of civilized international procedures, involved in that story.

"Raoul Wallenberg was one of the inspiring figures of World War II. His personal courage and dedication helped save the lives of thousands of men, women and children. He became a symbol of humanity at a time when Nazism had extended its inhumane practices over Eastern Europe.

"Raoul Wallenberg left the safety of his neutral Sweden in 1944 to go to war-torn Hungary on a mission for the International Red Cross. His purpose was to arrange the transfer to Sweden of Hungarian Jews threatened with persecution or death by the Nazis. He carried with him five thousand protective passports--but, according to some of his fellow diplomats, he succeeded in rescuing almost twenty thousand persons.

"Wallenberg was still in Budapest when the Soviet armies occupied the Hungarian capital. Shortly afterwards he disappeared. The Soviet military authorities denied any knowledge of his whereabouts. The first official Swedish inquiries went unanswered. Later, Soviet authorities said Wallenberg had been arrested by the German Gestapo (secret police). An official note said: 'Raoul Wallenberg is unknown to us. He has not been in the Soviet Union.'

"This version, however, did not satisfy the Swedish government--and for good reason. It was known that the last Nazi troops had already left Budapest at the time of Wallenberg's disappearance. He was last seen in the company of a Soviet army officer. The Swedish government persisted in its inquiries, only to be accused of using the Wallenberg case (quote) 'in the most shameless manner for purposes inimical to relations with the Soviet Union.'

SECRET

"This is where matters stood until last year--when Swedish Prime Minister Erlander made an official visit to Moscow and again raised the question. This time, the Soviet leaders promised to conduct an investigation into the Swedish diplomat's disappearance. And now, 11 months after this promise was made the Soviet government has finally admitted that Wallenberg was in fact kidnapped by Soviet secret police--and died in a Moscow prison in 1947 at the age of 34. His death went unreported, just as his imprisonment was accomplished in secret.

"The case of Raoul Wallenberg recalls Nikita Khrushchev's recital of the crimes and frame-ups of the Stalin era at the twentieth congress of the Soviet Communist Party last February. And again the present Soviet leaders place the blame for the crime on a dead Soviet official--this time on Abakumov, once a power in the Soviet secret police.

"But it hardly seems enough to express polite regrets and to place the responsibility on an executed official. Clearly Wallenberg's fate was not an isolated one. On many other occasions the Soviet government has replied to inquiries about missing foreign citizens--and about hundreds of thousands of missing war prisoners of many nationalities--with bland denials that it had any information. One of the morals to be drawn from the Wallenberg story is that a full and honest accounting is due to the families and governments of the many individuals who have disappeared in the Soviet Union. And, beyond this accounting, the world is entitled to some substantial assurances that similar practices are not being and will not be repeated." 6/

SECRET

SECRET

7. Michael Shipkov

Michael Shipkov, a Bulgarian national employed in the US Legation in Sofia after the war, was granted asylum in the Legation. He forsook the safety of the Legation on promises made to the US Minister by the Bulgarian Foreign Minister that he would seek passports and visas for the Shipkov family to emigrate. Instead, Shipkov was arrested, tried and sentenced.

When Shipkov was arrested by the Bulgarian Communist police, brutal interrogation forced a "confession" from him and he agreed to act as an informer on the US Legation. On his release he told the US Legation what had happened to him and he was granted asylum by the Legation. US Minister Heath negotiated with the Bulgarian authorities for Shipkov's safety and safe conduct out of Bulgaria. Popov (then Foreign Minister, later vice-premier and Politburo member) personally assured Mr. Heath on October 11, 1949 that the maltreatment of Shipkov was altogether against the policy of his government. He went so far as to inform Mr. Heath that he had personally recommended to the Interior Ministry that passports and visas be granted to the Shipkovs. Shipkov left the refuge of the US Legation on the strength of these promises and was immediately arrested, tried and sentenced. 7/

SECRET

SECRET

8. Bela Kovacs

Bela Kovacs, prominent political leader of the Smallholders Party in post-war Hungary, was seized by the Soviet military authorities in violation of his parliamentary immunity and dropped out of public sight until his reappearance shortly before the Hungarian revolution of 1956.

In 1946 Bela Kovacs was the Executive Secretary of the Smallholders Party. As this Party was the most powerful after the war in opposing the machinations of the Communists, the latter, backed by the Soviet occupation authorities, concocted the fiction of a "conspiracy" in which the Smallholder Party leaders were allegedly involved.

Although Ferenc Nagy--a close friend of Kovacs' and then Prime Minister--and the Hungarian Government's Committee on Immunities both refused to surrender Kovacs' parliamentary immunity, the Hungarian Chief of Cabinet, under pressure from Communists Rakosi and Szakasits, arranged to have Kovacs make a deposition at the Hungarian police headquarters while retaining his immunity.

On the second day of Kovacs' interrogation by the Hungarian police, Soviet soldiers appeared at police headquarters and spirited Kovacs away to his own home. The neighborhood of Kovacs' apartment was roadblocked by Russian soldiers. Under the command of a Soviet general in civilian clothes, other soldiers occupied the corridors of Kovacs' apartment house. After reading to Kovacs the Military Commander's order for his arrest, they confiscated his files and took him away to the Soviet military prison in Budapest, where the NKVD interrogated him for three months. At this time, although a man of known valor and a strong constitution, he was apparently broken by the skills of his Soviet interrogators, for he signed a confession implicating his loyal friend, Ferenc Nagy (then out of the country).

He was not heard from thereafter (and was generally presumed dead) 8/ until 10 years later, in April 1956, he was released from jail with other political figures during the post-Twentieth Party Congress "rehabilitation program." 9/

SECRET

SECRET

9. Laszlo Rajk

Laszlo Rajk, Communist Interior Minister in post-war Hungary, was arrested and betrayed into confessing to fictitious crimes on promises of safety made by Janos Kadar. Instead, he was executed in October 1949.

"The Party has been in power for a year since 1949. Mutual loyalty among Party members is a thing of the past. The purges have begun. True, no one has been arrested yet, but Rakosi has already announced that 'hostile elements, which have crept into the Party, must be driven out and put under lock and key.' Rajk is deposed as Interior Minister and transferred to the unimportant post of Foreign Minister. His successor at the Interior Ministry is Janos Kadar.

"Personally, the two remain good friends. In the spring, Mrs. Rajk gives birth to a son, and Kadar stands godfather at the Soviet-style christening ceremony. A few weeks later, Rajk is arrested. General Byelkin of the Soviet MVD (secret police) is in Budapest. Dozens, then hundreds of Old Guard Communists, heroes of the Spanish Civil War, prominent Marxists, time-tested comrades from the illegal days, are seized. They are described as members of the 'Rajk espionage ring.' Factories and Party cells organize protest meetings to demand that 'Rajk and the other gangster spies' be swiftly and mercilessly punished. Day after day, the newspapers publish wires calling for the immediate liquidation of 'the imperialist monster Rajk.'

"Kadar, the new Interior Minister, repeats constantly in speeches that Rajk is a wretched spy, imperialist and Tito agent who started out as a spy for the Hungarian political police and later worked for the Nazi Gestapo, and western spy rings.

"With Kadar Minister of the Interior, Mrs. Rajk is lying sick in the cellar of AVH (Hungarian secret police) prison; her son has been taken from her on orders from above. All of us in the adjoining cells thought for a long time that this represented the entire part played by little Laszlo Rajk's godfather in the Rajk tragedy. Years later, we learned that we had been wrong....

SECRET

SECRET

"We learned that after Kadar's release from prison he had visited Rajk's widow, who had also just been released. It was a shattering experience for Mrs. Rajk. Kadar told her that he was the one who, on Rakosi's orders, had made treacherous promises in order to induce Laszlo Rajk to make a false confession.

"'Can you forgive me?' asked Kadar when he had finished. Mrs. Rajk was silent a moment and then said:

"'I forgive you. My husband would have been murdered in any case. That was decided by Stalin, General Byelkin and Rakosi. If you had refused, then the baldheaded murderer [Rakosi] would have found other willing tools.'

"After a pause, she added:

"'But can you forgive yourself? ... Don't reply now.... There is another thing. If you want to go on living as a decent person, you must tell all Hungary and the whole world what the secret of the Rajk trial was and the role that you played in it.'

"Kadar seems to have still had some sort of conscience at that time. (Why else would he have sought out Mrs. Rajk and confessed things to her which no one knew?) But he did not have the courage to admit his deeds publicly.

"In 1955, Rakosi intensified his campaign against Imre Nagy. Kadar stood by passively as Rakosi removed Nagy from the Government and then had him expelled from the Party. Throughout 1956, however, the anti-Stalinist movement in Hungary gathered force. There were demands on all sides that Rakosi be called to account for the show trials and the mass murders. It became clear to the Party leaders that they would have to sacrifice Rakosi and some of his closer collaborators to save their own skins. They regarded Kadar as an acceptable successor to Rakosi--an opinion in which Kadar did his best to confirm them.

"Rakosi heard of the plan. At the next session of the Central Committee, he noted 'the unwise behavior of Comrade Kadar, who has aligned himself with the people who are today demanding punishment of all those responsible for the Rajk trial.' Then he turned to an aide and asked him to turn on a tape-recorder which had been set up in the room.

SECRET

SECRET

"With amazement and horror, the Committee members heard a conversation which had taken place seven years before at 60 Andrassy Street, former headquarters of the AVH, between Laszlo Rajk and Janos Kadar, Kadar was urging Rajk, his best friend, to confess to the secret police and Byelkin's men everything they asked.

"In so doing, Kadar made no attempt whatever to depict Rajk as a criminal. Indeed, he stressed repeatedly that Rajk was obviously innocent. His sole argument was that world Communism urgently needed the confessions since this was the only way to 'expose' Tito. The Party did not ask Rajk to sacrifice his life, only to commit a kind of moral suicide. His execution would be announced publicly, and he, his wife and son would then be sent to the Crimea to recuperate. After a period of time, he would be assigned an important Party post in a remote part of the USSR under another name. The Party would always be grateful to him.

"Even after weeks of sleeplessness, hunger and mistreatment, Rajk did not permit himself to be convinced at once. Kadar reasoned with him, flattered him, promised him the sun, moon and stars--but Rajk held firm. No one would believe, he said, that a man like him, who had belonged to the Party since early youth, had been a police spy and had worked for a half-dozen secret services, including the Gestapo.

"'What do you gain by proving that I have always been a scoundrel?' asked Rajk. 'If you must have a conspiracy, you can charge that I instigated a plot against Rakosi. That is also untrue, but it sounds a little more plausible.'

"Kadar told him that, to stir the people up against Tito, Rajk had to be branded a lifelong miscreant. Rajk finally promised to think Kadar's proposal over. Kadar gave his word of honor that the terms of the agreement would be carried out immediately after the trial. At this time, Mrs. Rajk was already in prison. Her son had been placed in a Party nursery under a false name and his birth certificate destroyed." 10/ Rajk was executed in October 1949.

SECRET

SECRET

10. Vladimir Clementis

Vladimir Clementis succeeded Jan Masaryk as Czechoslovak Foreign Minister on the latter's death in 1948. In 1949 he returned to Prague from New York, where he was head of the Czech UN delegation, despite widespread warnings from friends and the Western press that he was in trouble with the regime. The referenced report (see footnote 11) is the only source found giving as the reason for his return the assurances of President Gottwald concerning his personal safety, and the use of his wife as a lure. He "resigned" his ministerial post in March 1950, and was given a minor job as a bank official. He was apprehended by the police in February 1951 and caught up in the large-scale purges and show-trials of Czech leaders, including Party boss Slansky, in 1952. Clementis was executed on 3 December 1952.

"The arrest and imprisonment of Vladimir Clementis did not take place until nearly one year after he had been removed from his position as Minister For Foreign Affairs [of Czechoslovakia]. The reason for this delay was a psychological one. By allowing some time to elapse between the time of his resignation and arrest, the accusation of Clementis would appear more probable and the affair would have the desired effect within Czechoslovakia as well as in foreign countries. Another reason was that some prominent Communist Party functionaries had not been in favor of sentencing and imprisoning Clementis. President Gottwald himself was one of these. For example, in 1949 when Clementis filled the post as head of the Czechoslovak Mission to the United Nations Organization in New York and the Western press loudly insisted that Clementis would only be sentenced and imprisoned if he returned home, President Gottwald wrote to him personally assuring him that nothing of the sort would happen upon his return....

"Clementis had been partially informed of the events in Czechoslovakia to which the Western press had referred by his Deputy, President of the Slovak Communist Party and now the New Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vilian Sirsky. Because the Western press stated very convincingly that Clementis did not intend to return to Czechoslovakia, the President's office decided to send Clementis more detailed information about the events in Czechoslovakia along with a letter from President Gottwald....

SECRET

SECRET

"After the return from New York of the personal courier who had delivered this letter and information, the Executive Committee of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party decided to send Mrs. Clementis to New York in order to strengthen Clementis' confidence in Prague and to quiet press rumors that the only reason Clementis would not resign and stay in the United States was because the Czechs were holding his wife as hostage. The Czechoslovak propaganda organs made much of Mrs. Clementis' trip, sending reports of her departure to all world news agencies....

"Just before Christmas of 1949, Clementis returned with his delegation and his wife to Prague. He traveled from New York to Paris by ship and from Paris to Prague by special train. In Paris he was met by Deputy Foreign Minister Borek and Clementis' personal secretary and friend Theo H. Florin who had come from Prague for the occasion. Later information indicated that the real purpose of Florin's trip to Paris had been to warn Clementis to disregard the promises from Prague, and not to return. Florin was himself arrested suddenly in January 1950, ostensibly for homosexuality and for having Western contacts; the real reason was his vast knowledge concerning Clementis' private life and connections. Thus, Clementis' return to Prague and his apparently friendly reception dispersed any ugly rumors spread by the Western press. This, however, was Clementis' last trip to a foreign country....

"The next event in the Clementis case was his so-called resignation as minister for Foreign Affairs in March 1950. Clementis was compelled by the highest Party functionaries (evidently on the basis of a directive from Moscow) to resign voluntarily from his office. Their aim was to remove Clementis from the government as well as from political prominence. The main role in this matter was played by Viliam Siroky who became Clementis' successor. Not even President Gottwald, who was a very good friend of Clementis and who took it upon himself to inform Clementis and discuss the affair with him, could bring about a reversal of the decree. His resignation came suddenly and unexpectedly. It was not part of a general Party purge nor was it a result of any reorganization within the government. It was effected in 48 hours....

"Some days after his resignation, Clementis appeared in his office for the last time when, accompanied by Siroky he visited all the leading officers of the Ministry and took leave of them, at the same time presenting Siroky....

SECRET

SECRET

"Clementis continued to live in his flat in the Ministry building until December 1950. He also continued to use his official car and was always accompanied by one of his personal guards.... During this time Clementis did not make any public appearances either in Prague or in Slovakia. He performed only the functions of a Member of Parliament and made a few speeches before the Committees of the National Assembly. In the Autumn of 1950 he took on his new job as director of the State Bank Foreign Exchange Department. It was there in February 1951 that he was apprehended under absolutely secret circumstances, so that for a long time, no one...could say with certainty whether Clementis had been apprehended or whether he had succeeded in escaping to a foreign country, as the Western press indicated.

"On the day of his arrest Clementis left home as usual with his guard in his big Tatra car. In the office he merely deposited his briefcase and left immediately, got into the car and drove away. Only a change of guards set into action what was to become his arrest. On the day of his arrest, the Prague Radio Station in its 'Security News' broadcast an urgent and repeated appeal to detain under any circumstances the black Tatra bearing Clementis' license number, with or without passengers....In addition, another rumor had been spread that...Clementis' brother-in-law...had prepared for Clementis' illegal escape.... It is not definitely known whether ~~the brother-in-law~~ really prepared this escape, or whether it was just a fictitious story concocted by the security agents.... If it was a fabrication of the Security Office it served the following purposes: (a) to conceal the arrest of Clementis; (b) to confuse the friends of Clementis and thus make them tend to betray themselves; and (c) to use this attempted escape as the reason for his arrest and as evidence against him in the trial....

"A number of questions naturally arise concerning the arrest and imprisonment of Clementis.... The main argument against Clementis today ~~1951~~, however, is the inimical attitude he took toward the USSR.... He is charged with merely feigning respect for the USSR in order to keep his position and to further undermine Soviet interests. Nor was Clementis himself popular in the Soviet orbit. All major issues emanating from Moscow were always discussed in Clementis' absence, even after he had become a leading personality in Czechoslovak Foreign Policy. The results of these Moscow conferences were relayed to Clementis by Bedrich Geminder....

SECRET

SECRET

"Among other contributing factors in the case against Clementis is the enmity which existed between Siroky and Clementis...which antagonism was supported by Moscow....

"Before the public had been given at least a partial explanation of the last purge and before the provisions of the February 1951 session of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party for neutralizing the shock of a purge without lessening the threat had been known, Soviet Security Minister Lavrenti Beria flew to Prague to take part in the preliminary discussions of the most important cases.... For the most part it is believed that Beria was present at the discussions merely as an observer, with the intention of seeing to what extent the Soviet interests were being fulfilled.... As far as Clementis was concerned, however, the Soviets were probably interested in the possibility for using him as an example of how not to conduct the affairs of a Communist government. It is also possible that Beria contributed to charges against Clementis (i.e., his attitude toward the Soviets), and that he took part in the formulation of other charges as well. These suppositions are based on the fact that the February session of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party was the most secret of all sessions up to this time. It was also an instructive session. All of the leading representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the countries of the People's Democracies, as well as Harry Pollitt of the British Communist Party, Jacques Duclos of the French Communist Party, Pietro Secchia of the Italian Communist Party and representatives of the East German SED were present. It is believed, too, that at this session the policy was outlined for conducting similar trials in other countries of the People's Democracies....

"Clementis was jailed in the vicinity of Prague.... The prison consists of a group of security villas on the forest's edge...." 11

"The leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has always reflected all the major movements of the weathervane on the Kremlin. In the period of the Soviet fight against Titoism, the Communist regime of Czechoslovakia staged a trial which, on the basis of the usual trumped-up charges of high treason in general and Titoism in particular, sent eleven top Communist leaders, most of them of Jewish origin, to the gallows.... During the trial, which had lasted from November 20, 1952 to November 27, 1952, eleven of the fourteen defendants were sentenced to death and the remaining

~~SECRET~~

three to life imprisonment. Among the eleven were the former Secretary General of the Party, Rudolf Slansky, and the former Foreign Minister, Vlado Clementis. 12/ Clementis was hanged in Prague on 3 December 1952. 13/

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

11. Polish Underground Leaders

At the end of World War II, 16 Polish anti-Nazi underground leaders were tricked into revealing themselves and negotiating with the Soviet military authorities, ostensibly regarding the post-war administration of Poland. Instead of a promised meeting with General Zhdanov at his headquarters, they were flown to Moscow and imprisoned.

"After the defeat of the Warsaw Rising and the destruction of Warsaw, the Polish Underground authorities found themselves dispersed. Many of the leaders were killed, others were captured by the Germans. The rest, together with the remnants of Warsaw's population, were scattered all over Poland. The disruption of communications, the division of the country by the front line and, above all, the relentless pursuit and arrest--whether by the Germans or Russians--of the members of the Underground Movement for some time made any effective action impossible. But, as soon as the front line moved further west, the central authorities of the Polish Underground succeeded, despite the difficulties, in re-establishing themselves in the vicinity of Warsaw.

"The Soviet armies had by now occupied nearly all Poland, and their administrative authorities were doing much more than coping with the day-to-day problems arising from the necessities of the campaign. Their activities amounted, in fact, to the construction of a new kind of existence for Poland, which had no links, political, social, or economic, with the national past.

"Meanwhile, the Red Army, together with the Soviet security police, began mass arrests of Polish citizens, who were deported to Russia. The first victims were the members of the Polish Underground civil administration who always, immediately after their district was freed from the Germans, abandoned their hiding-places and took up their positions in the civil administration.

"The Home Army was disbanded by order of the Polish Government in London on February 8th, 1945, but its former members did not escape the Soviet vengeance. A network of agents and informers was cast over the country with the task of picking out former soldiers of the Home Army who had returned to civilian life. The fact that anyone had taken part in the Warsaw Rising, or even that he had served in the Home Army, was sufficient cause for imprisonment. During the first half of 1945, thousands of people

SECRET

were arrested, whose only crime was to have fought for years against the Germans."

On August 29th, 1944, both the British and the American Governments had recognized the combatant status of the soldiers of the Polish Home Army. Russia who, although an ally of the Western Powers, had not recognized that status, now treated Home Army soldiers as if they were common criminals and enemies.

"The prisons were overfull with Home Army members. The number of those arrested was far beyond their capacity, and many were kept in specially organized camps guarded by Soviet troops. One of these larger camps was at Rembertow near Warsaw.

"Such was the position when, on March 6th, 1945, Mr. Jankowski, Vice-Premier of the Polish Government, and the Delegate of the Government for the Homeland, received through the Underground organization a letter signed by Pimenov, a Colonel of the Guards in the Red Army. This letter proposed that a meeting be arranged between the Delegate of the Polish Government and Colonel-General Ivanov, the headquarters representative of the Soviet armies occupying Polish territory. The letter contained the following passage:

" 'I see the difficulties of such a step, but I am sensible, too, of the pressing necessity and the tremendous importance of this meeting, of which it is impossible to give details in this brief letter. I believe that the proposed meeting between yourself and General Ivanov could and should definitely settle those problems which apparently it has been hitherto found impossible to solve otherwise. Mutual understanding and confidence will enable decisions to be made upon the most vital questions and will check the possibility of a further increase of tension.'

"And again:

" 'For my part, as an officer of the Red Army to whom has been granted the privilege of undertaking this most important mission, I give you my word of honour that, from the moment of your arrival at the place of the meeting, your safety will be my concern personally. You will be perfectly secure.'

"There were two reasons why the Government's Delegate, as well as the Council of Ministers and the executives of all the Polish political parties, decided to respond favourably to this initiative of the Soviet military authorities.

SECRET

SECRET

"In the first place, they wanted to find out the real intentions of the Soviet Government, in view of the confusion reigning throughout the country. It was necessary to find out whether the outrages and acts of violence, and high-handedness far exceeding the privileges which an occupational force could claim by the rules of international law, were simply instances of chaos and indiscipline among the Soviet troops, or whether they were an expression of an official policy aimed at terrorising Poland into acknowledging dependence on Moscow.

"The second reason was a sincere desire to spare no efforts to avoid further losses among the Polish population, which had already suffered so tremendously during the years of war.

"The decision to start talks was undertaken with the full consent of the Polish Government in London, and the Governments of the United Kingdom and of the U.S.A. were informed of the decision. The Polish Government expressed hopes that such negotiations would lead to a future agreement between Poland and the U.S.S.R.

"The first unofficial talks were held at the Red Army Headquarters in Pruszkow near Warsaw, and lasted from March 17th to March 27, 1945.

"The result of these negotiations was a promise by the Soviet authorities, as an expression of their good will, to free a whole group of Home Army commanders whom they had previously arrested. Further to that, the Soviet authorities agreed that eight representatives of the Polish authorities should go to London for consultation with the Polish Government there. The Russian military authorities would supply an aircraft to take them over. In the end, to give the whole conference a more formal character, the representatives of the central authorities of Underground Poland, together with representatives of the major Polish political parties and of the Home Army Command, were invited to an official luncheon party by Marshal Zhukov, who had received plenipotentiary powers to negotiate in the name of the Soviet Government.

"On March 27th, 1945, sixteen leaders of the Polish Underground State voluntarily left their places of concealment and came to the Russian headquarters to take part in the meeting. They were received by the assembled high military dignitaries. A general of the Red Army apologised for a delay in the arrival of Marshal

SECRET

SECRET

Zhukov, giving as the reason certain developments in the Russian offensive, which was being directed personally by the Marshal. Next day, the Polish delegation was informed that Marshal Zhukov had invited them to join him at his own headquarters, and that he had sent an aircraft to collect them. During the flight, however, the Poles were informed by an escorting Soviet officer that Marshal Zhukov was in Moscow and that he would receive them there. Luxurious limousines were ready to take them from the airfield, in the company of a Red Army general who had specially been sent to greet them. . . The cars went straight through the gates of the Lubyanka prison.

"After waiting for ten days for the delegation to return from the reception and having no news from them, the Polish Government became seriously worried as to their fate and made the news of their disappearance public.

"At first nobody believed it. But, on the urgent representations of the Polish Government, the British Ambassador in Moscow officially questioned the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. The answer he received was: The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs knows nothing about the alleged confidential negotiations held between the Soviet Government and the adherents of the Polish London Government.

"The veil of silence was lifted by Mr. Molotov on May 4th, 1945, at the International Conference at San Francisco, when the Soviet Foreign Secretary mentioned that 16 Polish political leaders had been arrested on the charge of anti-Soviet activities.

"This insidious outrage against a privilege of immunity, which has been recognised throughout history, occasioned a wave of indignation. The Soviet Government hastened therefore to deny that they ever invited the Polish representatives to negotiate.

"On May 18th, 1945, in answer to a letter from The Times correspondent, Stalin himself stated: 'It is untrue that the arrested Poles had ever been invited to negotiate with Soviet representatives.'

"Later on, during the trial, when Mr. Stypulkowski, one of the defendants, mentioned the invitation sent by Marshal Zhukov, General Ulrich, the President of the Court, interrupted him and stated that no such invitation had ever been sent out. He added: ' . . . apparently you fell for a trick of the NKVD.'

SECRET

"All references to an invitation to a conference about the future of Polish-Russian relations had been carefully removed from the earlier reports about the trial.

"There is no need to enlarge on this outline. The method, of first concealing the facts and later on of denying them when they were obviously true, speaks for itself.

"After a few days in the Lubianka prison, the delegates received written warrants for their arrest, containing also a list of charges against them. They were accused of organising and leading a Polish Underground Movement in the rear of the Soviet armies; of obeying instructions from the London Polish Government to conduct sabotage activities against the Red Army and the Soviet Union; of spreading propaganda against the U.S.S.R. and the Red Army; of inspiring attempts on the lives of Soviet officers and men; and of breaking Soviet military regulations, and so on.

"The investigation lasted from March 29th to June 18th, 1945. It was carried out in the usual method of the Soviet secret police. The arrested delegates were questioned from a hundred to two hundred times, each examination lasting at least three, and sometimes as much as twelve, hours without a break. Various devices were used to weaken the accused both physically and morally. Sleeplessness, hunger and cold, an incessant blinding light and a general atmosphere of terror were the conditions in which they had to face, again and again, the same interrogations. In the end, they had no power any more to resist the suggestions of their interlocutors.

"That is how the Soviet Government staged the public trial of the sixteen leaders of the Polish Underground State, who for five and a half years had led a national struggle against the German aggressor, side by side with all the other Allied nations.

"Characteristic features of the indictment, which was handed to the defendants, were that it treated as already proven the individual accusations on which it was based, and that it imputed to the defendants clandestine activities behind the Red Army's front line, aimed at collaboration with the Germans in military action against the Russians. The accused were brought before the Court on the charge of contravening the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R., and it was specified that the defendants were within the jurisdiction of the Soviet military authorities, in accordance

SECRET

with the 'Agreement' signed on July 27th, 1944, between the Soviet Government and the 'Polish Committee for National Liberation.' This Agreement had presumed to fix the relations between the Soviet Supreme Commander-in-Chief and the Polish Home authorities retrospectively to the entry of Soviet troops into Polish territory.

"The trial, which was labelled by the Russians 'The Trial of the Polish Diversionists,' took place in Moscow before a Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. It lasted three days, from June 18th till June 21st, 1945, and the proceedings followed strictly the usual pattern of Soviet show trials. A motion of the defendants asking for the admittance of witnesses was rejected on the ground that the witnesses in question could not be heard in court due 'to the impossibility of bringing them over either today or tomorrow.'

"Most of the accused were found guilty, and the following sentences were passed: —

1. General Leopold Okulicki, Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army since the capture of General Bor-Komorowski by the Germans after Warsaw's capitulation--10 years' imprisonment.
2. Jan Jankowski, Vice-Premier of the Polish Government in London, Chief Delegate of the Government for the Homeland, representative of the Christian Labour Party--8 years' imprisonment.
3. Adam Bien, member of the Underground Government, representative of the Peasant Party--5 years' imprisonment.
4. Stanislaw Jasiukowicz, member of the Underground Government, representative of the National Party--5 years' imprisonment.
5. Kazimierz Puzak, Speaker of the Underground Parliament, General Secretary of the Polish Socialist Party--18 months' imprisonment.
6. Kazimierz Baginski, representative of the Peasant Party--12 months' imprisonment.

SECRET

7. Alexander Zwierzynski, representative of the National Party-- 8 months' imprisonment.
8. Eugeniusz Czarnowski, Chairman of the Board of the Federation of Democratic Organization--6 months' imprisonment.
9. Stanislaw Mierzwa, member of the Peasant Party--4 months' imprisonment.
10. Zbigniew Stypulkowski, member of the Praesidium of the National Party--4 months' imprisonment.
11. Jozef Chacinski, Chairman of the Christian Labour Party--4 months' imprisonment.
12. Franciszek Urbanski, member of the Christian Labour Party--4 months' imprisonment.

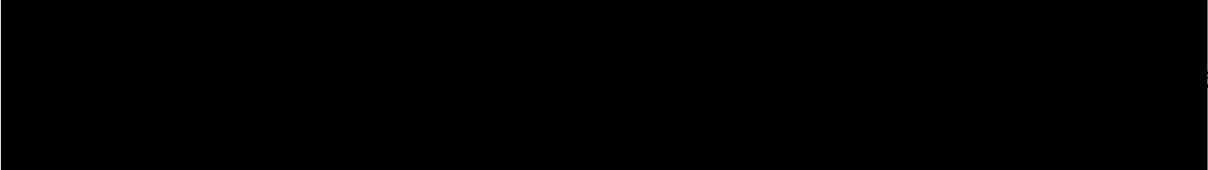
"Three of the remaining four were acquitted; one of the defendants was not tried, due to his state of health.

"The sentences were final; there could be no appeal.

"By such methods, of treachery, force and the manipulation of justice, Poland was deprived of the political leaders of her democracy. During precisely the same period, the Commission of the three Yalta Powers was holding a conference in Moscow, under the chairmanship of Mr. Molotov, on the problem of forming a Polish 'Government of National Unity.'" 14/

~~SECRET~~

SOURCES

1. Walter G. Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service, New York, Harper, 1939, pp. 128, 130-1.
2. C. A. Smith (ed.), Escape From Paradise, London, Hollis & Carter, 1954, p. 26.
Cf. also Franz Borkenau, European Communism, London, Faber & Faber Ltd., 1953, p. 191.
3. Krivitsky, op. cit., pp. 123, 124.
4. Alexander Barmine, One Who Survived, New York, Putnam's Sons, 1945, p. 307n.
5. Julien Steinberg (ed.), Verdict of Three Decades, New York, Duell Sloan & Pearce, 1950, pp. 424-425.
6. USIA, Central Program Services Division, Special Talk #275, "The Wallenberg Story," 11 Feb 57.
7. Hugo Dewar, The Modern Inquisition, London, Allan Wingate, 1953, p. 66ff.
8. Ferenc Nagy, The Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain, New York, Macmillan, 1948.
9. Francois Fejto, La Tragedie Hongroise, Paris, Editions Pierre Moray, 1956, p. 34.
10. George Palocz-Horvath, "The Life and Times of Janos Kadar," New Leader, 8 Apr 57.
11. 
12. Stephen D. Kertesz, The Fate of East Central Europe, Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1956, p. 213, 213n.
13. New York Times, 4 Dec 52.
14. Bronislaw Kusnierz, Stalin and the Poles, London, Hollis & Carter, 1949, pp. 228-235.
Cf. also Z. Stypulkowski, Invitation to Moscow, London, Thames & Hudson, 1951.

25X1C5b

~~SECRET~~